



Making paths to careers at the Laboratory

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Creative hiring and training programs provide job opportunities for New Mexicans

While the pandemic has affected the way the world works, hiring and training the next generation of workers at the Laboratory needs to continue, and over the summer the Lab found creative ways to keep welcoming new people into the workforce.

Events lead to high rates of in-state hires

The Laboratory's recruiting has transitioned to taking place virtually, and two events took place in August focusing specifically on high-demand positions such as hazardous materials technicians, engineers, and machinists. Current employees shared what it's like to work at the Laboratory's plutonium processing facility, presented an introductory video about the facility, and discussed the steps of the new hire process. Recruiters interviewed 118 candidates via WebEx, and made 48 offers on the spot, more than half of them to New Mexico residents.

New partnership kicks off first cohort

Meanwhile, the Laboratory also welcomed for an orientation event the first cohort of Santa Fe Community College (SFCC) students that are taking part in a collaborative machinists program. The program is a competitive academic opportunity and strategic partnership between the Laboratory and SFCC, designed to prepare students with specialized skills for the highly precise field of machining. Students will work toward a two-year associates degree while they intern part-time at the Laboratory.

The first cohort consists of six students, including one existing Laboratory employee.

This digitally-modified group photo was taken in a safe, socially-distant setting, and was edited to appear as a group photo. The first SMM cohort members with LANL staff and SFCC professor Miguel Maestas (front right).

Speaking at the orientation, Kevin Gallahue, a Laboratory deputy division leader said, "Machining is at the absolute center of everything we do."

The students met mentors and other employees who will help them, and discussed the significance of machining to the national security work of the Laboratory.

Laboratory Director Thom Mason made a virtual appearance at the orientation with a welcome video.

“We started this program with Santa Fe Community College in order to stay ahead of the increasing demand we see for this critical skillset,” he said. “I’d like to thank everyone at the Laboratory and at Santa Fe Community College for making this possible.”

Los Alamos National Laboratory

www.lanl.gov

(505) 667-7000

Los Alamos, NM

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